McCone Told Warren Computers Could Help

Testimony Data Processing to Better Agencies' Liaison on Potential Assassins

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Star Staff Writer

John A. McCone director of the Central Intelligence Agency, in testimony before the Warren Commission, urged that Federal intelligence agencies adopt computers and data processing to improve liaison in cases of potential assassins, the Star has learned.

Testifying last May 14 before the panel that investigated the assassination of President Kennedy, McCone told Chief Justice Earl Warren and the other commission members:

"There is a great deal of improvement of information that might be of importance in a matter of this kind through the use of computers and mechanical means of handling files, and, you, Mr. Chief Justice, saw some of our installations and that was only a beginning of what really can be done.

Urged Reward

"I would certainly urge that all departments of government that are involved in this adopt the most modern methods of automatic data processing with respect to the personnel files and other files relating to individuals. But I emphasize that a computer will not replace the man, and therefore, we must have at all levels a complete exchange of information and cooperation between agencies where they share this responsibility."

McCone also recommended legislation for a system of rewards for informers who might furnish information about potential assassins. He told the commission:

"I have given a good deal of thought to the matter of some incentives to bring out informers."

He said he had in mind the old informer statutes, some of which are still on the books, in which people were rewarded for informing.

He said he believed something could be done under a clause of the Atomic Energy Act that provides rewards for information leading to the apprehension of persons attempting to import special nuclear materials or nuclear weapons into the United States.

"Some such legislation might be enacted," McCone said, "which would make it really worthwhile for a fellow who sold . . . a gun with a telescopic gunsight to a person that he might be suspicious of would have an incentive to watch him very carefully and maybe in-

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Evans
Gale
Rosen
Sullivan
Tavel
Trotter
Tele Room
Holmes
Gandy

What about this process?

The Washington Post and Times Herald
The Washington Daily News
The Evening Star
New York Herald Tribune
New York Journal-American
New York Mirror
New York Daily News
New York Post
The New York Times
The Sun
The New Leader
The Wall Street Journal
The National Observer
People's World
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form the author concerning that sale."

Commission Counsel J. Lee Rankin asked McCone if he believed methods for the exchange of information between government intelligence agencies could be materially improved. He replied that he thought the Central Intelligence Agency's exchanges with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Secret Service "are quite adequate."

Questioned By Dulles

Former CIA Director Allen W. Dulles, a member of the Warren panel, asked McCone whether he felt the CIA received adequate information from the State Department at the time of the defection of Lee Harvey Oswald, accused assassin of Kennedy, and his later activities in the Soviet Union.

McCone replied, "Well, I am not sure we got full information, Mr. Dulles. The fact is we had very little information in our files."

Richard M. Helms, deputy CIA director, then testified that he assumed the State Department had only limited information about Oswald. He said it is hard to find people who were in the United States Embassy in Moscow who were familiar with Oswald's case.

McCone testified it was the State Department's responsibility to transmit information to the CIA about Americans such as Oswald in the Soviet Union. But he did not think there was any order requiring that information about an American citizen returning from a foreign country be sent to the CIA.

Rep. Gerald Ford, R.-Mich. asked if the CIA was informed by the State Department step by-step of Oswald's defection and successful attempt to return.

Helms replied it was this impression the CIA was not informed step-by-step but that there was no requirement that the State Department should do so.

"But an American going to the American Embassy would be handled by the embassy offi- be handled by the embassy officials," Helms declared, "either consular or otherwise, and this would be a matter well within the purview of the State Department to keep all the way through, because we do not have responsibility in the Central Intelligence Agency for the conduct or behavior or anything else of American citizens when they are abroad."

Uniqueness of Case

Ford then told Helms:

"I think it could be argued, however, that the uniqueness of this individual case was such that the Department of State might well have contacted the Central Intelligence Agency to keep them abreast of the developments as they occurred. This is not, and when I say this, I mean the Oswald case, is not an ordinary run of the mine type of case.

"And I am only suggesting that if the regulations were not adequate at the time and are not now, maybe something ought to be done about it."

Sen. John Sherman Cooper, R.-Ky., asked McCone if it would have been possible to have secured more comprehensive information about the activities of Oswald in Russia. McCone replied it would not have been possible for the CIA "because we do not have resources to gain such information."

McCone said the CIA did investigate Oswald's trip to Mexico. He said the judgment was that Oswald made contact with the Cuban Embassy while there in order to obtain transit privileges and was unsuccessful.

"We could not verify that he was there for any other purpose or that his trip to Mexico was in any way related to his later action in assassinating President Kennedy," McCone replied.